

the military equipment for the 8 years of French warfare against much of the local population of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

But in 1954, there were still Americans who believed that active participation in the war by U.S. military forces could save Indochina for France. There were demands for air strikes from the U.S. 7th Fleet, based in the western Pacific. There were hints that U.S. troops might be landed. I was one of several Senators, many of them leading Democrats, who argued vigorously against such an extension of the U.S. involvement. The adverse reaction from so many in Congress and among the general public undoubtedly was a factor in President Eisenhower's rejection of U.S. military involvement in Indochina. The United States did not intervene militarily in 1954. The result was the Geneva conference which provided for the end of French rule over Indochina.

#### GENEVA SETTLEMENT

But we did pursue and continue U.S. aid directly to much of Indochina. We began extensive financial aid to Cambodia, Laos, and South Vietnam. In the South we established a government which we thought would be favorable to the United States. In fact, we hand-picked from Washington and New York a South Vietnam exile named Diem who had never participated in his country's war against the French and we sent him to South Vietnam, financed him, militarized his regime, and proclaimed through our recognition of his administration that his was an independent government.

He became our agent in South Vietnam. In collaboration with his puppet government, we undertook military activities in South Vietnam that were in violation of the Geneva agreement. Some involved distribution of weapons, others the covert establishment of military installations.

The Geneva agreement had, in the words of the final interpretative declaration, been intended to settle the military hostilities in Indochina and, to quote: "create the necessary basis for the achievement in the near future of a political settlement in Vietnam." The political settlement was to follow in 1956, when the two military zones of North and South were to be politically united through general elections.

The final declaration of the Geneva Conference called for elections throughout Vietnam in July 1956, to be conducted under the supervision of the International Control Commission. The declaration further called upon officials from North and South to meet to arrange for the election. The specific language of the declaration said:

7. The conference declares that, so far as Vietnam is concerned, the settlement of political problems, effected on the basis of respect for the principles of independence, unity and territorial integrity, shall permit the Vietnamese people to enjoy the fundamental freedoms, guaranteed by democratic institutions established as a result of free general elections by secret ballot. In order to ensure that sufficient progress in the restoration of peace has been made, and that

Mr. MORSE. Mr. President, at the time Vice President Nixon sent up his trial balloon, suggesting that American forces be sent into Indochina, the United States had financed France for 8 years in its effort to regain control over a major colony from they had been ousted by Japan. Few Americans realize today that one very serious drawback to the U.S. intervention in Vietnam today is our record of putting up the money and

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